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# The consequences of our actions

By Will Nicholls

It's quiet in the office at night. I like it. There are almost no distractions and I can see the patterns of life around the world. Connections you might have missed before are now visible. The funding cuts to the Canada's Cultural Connections for Aboriginal Youth Program worried me for some reason for some time.

Alone with my thoughts it hit me. I remember reading a press release that said there are more children in foster care today than the total number of all the Aboriginal children who ever attended residential school in Canada. I'm not alone in thinking what's happening gives the appearance of creating a new method of the continuing the objectives that the residential schools operated under. The resulting class-action suit over that era was in Canadian courts for nine years. 2005 saw a victory of sorts for Aboriginal peoples and the residential school issue.

Canada and the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs justify their actions by saying child protection laws necessitate the removal of Aboriginal children from their parents. Of course, there are only so many Aboriginal foster parents and group homes, thus they must be relocated outside their communities. It is for the children's benefit was the same cry that justified the residential school system and it hasn't changed for this system.

Some would see this as a way of getting around the Geneva's Convention on Genocide where one group forcibly transfers children of the group to another group. Or given the past Canadian experience with residential schools ensure two more parts of the convention definition are broken. They are: "causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group"; and "deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part".

The residential experience certainly supports that three acts of genocide as defined and enacted by the international community were violated repeatedly. Canada signed the Convention November 28, 1949 and ratified it. It was deposited with the United Nations on September 3, 1952. Yet those violations continued as late as the 1980s.

But back to foster care where Canada dons the clothing of parens patrie (legalese) and acts as a surrogate parent who can supersede the rights of the natural parents when it is in the child's best interests. Canada as a state decides what is in the best interest for the child. Yet one feels the aims of Canada vto assimilate the Aboriginal Peoples is not a historical policy but has merely seen a change in methodology.

Canada's Aboriginal Peoples are not alone. In her "What was Australia's Stolen Generation?" article, writer Alia Hoyt stated, "History is rife with examples of flagrant human rights violations, and even picturesque Australia is not immune to the occurrence of these injustices: Between 1910 and 1970, roughly 100,000 Aboriginal children were forcibly removed from their homes" because "the government believed that the children would fare better if raised by white families..."

Because the Canadian government is cutting funding to Cultural Connections for Aboriginal Youth Program and redirecting that funding to job training and education, a problem will arise.

While the program could not possibly replace being in a First Nations community for those in foster care or those who experienced it, this could create repercussions that future generations of Canadians will have to deal with. Perhaps in the end that is the problem as the results will only be felt down the road. But isn't it time we consider the consequences of our actions?

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# Firestorm

By Sonny Orr



Recently, on a great day on the coast of Hudson's Bay, everyone in town was out picnicking, enjoying the final days of spring. As I ran about town picking up forgotten items like insect repellent and marshmallows and other essential items, I bumped into several friends of mine who had just come back from the fabled picnic areas of Great Whale River.

My buddy's wife blurted out that they had just started a forest fire! Wow, I thought, this is a first for me, never met a pyro person before. Apparently, they had just set down their frying pan to fry up some juicy pork chops when a small fire started on the dry grounds. After some feverish foot stamping, nature got the better of them and the little flame spread so rapidly, that within seconds, it had spread to the nearby bushes. Minutes later, the trees caught fire.

Luckily, they managed to get back to town unsinged, but the fire spread and before long dominated the skies with black smoke. Soon, fire trucks headed down the dusty gravel road and all local firefighters were called into action. Meanwhile, I continued with the picnic plans and headed out on my trusty ATV. The road to the coast was soon cordoned off and no one could head further up the bay, so we settled on a nearby picnic site.

By the end of my picnic session, we all headed back home for the relative safety of town, where there is nothing really to burn except dry grass. But luckily the winds kept the now raging fires at bay. We all settled down for the night, as rain showers comforted us and sleep took over, but still, it was uneasily hot as the night air refused to cool down.

The next day, the family decided to check out the damage done by the forest fire. I stayed behind, begging to stay in the basement and hide out from the

oppressive heat wave and observe the weather from the safety of my cool home. Hours later, I worried about the family as I saw thick brown smoke blowing past in the nearby hills. The smoke got thicker and thicker and I stepped outside to taste the smell of smoke. Strangely, there was no smell to detect and I ventured a few more feet from my porch.

Immediately, my exposed skin felt like it was being pelted by rocks and then I realized it wasn't smoke that I was worried about, but a wall of blowing sand. Shades of the Sahara! A sand-storm! What next? Quickly I returned to the safety of indoors and immediately went to the washroom to rinse off the sand from my eyes and ears. Poor family, I hope they get back soon. The gusting winds howled like a drunken banshee on PMS and the house shuddered from the hurricane-like conditions.

My family soon returned, everyone looking like they hadn't showered in decades. Sand was literally falling off their clothes and one by one, they washed their soiled faces. "Wow," my little daughter exclaimed. Nonchalantly, I asked how the fire was doing and apparently it flared up again, this time with a vengeance. Oh, oh, I thought, not another evacuation. Bad timing to leave town as my bank account was practically empty and couldn't afford an unscheduled vacation.

Suddenly, dark angry clouds appeared and torrential rain poured from the heavens, with rapid-fire lightning bolts screeching across the skies, searing the air with intense negative ions. At last, it was over and blackened and tired firefighters returned home, thankful for the assistance from above. Strange weather it seems, will bind everyone together.

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# Saving young lives

## Moose Factory program connects the youth with traditional ways

By Akiva Levitas

Apathy and boredom may seem harmless at first, which allows them to take root in communities causing devastation among those most affected – the youth.

In Moose Factory, in order to combat the pervasiveness of suicide among the youth, Deputy Chief Charlie Cheechoo began Project George three years ago to help young people break out of the path of apathy, addiction and eventually suicide.

Cheechoo began the project after an Elder spoke to him about what the youth

with all the food being shared with the community.

The youth are taught numerous activities, including how to set traps, prepare moose meat, ice fish along the Onakawana River and snowmobile. Without the project, these kids wouldn't have any other chance to learn those skills.

Without the program, the troubled youth in the area would have no one to take them out into the bush and teach them about their culture, thereby pre-

about suicide victims going to heaven along with the tributes to them by the community, such as hanging their hockey jerseys on the local arena rafters, only serves to glorify suicide.

What the youth need to hear is not that their friends are going to a better place, but that life is where our dreams happen. Project George serves those troubled children by giving them a positive outlook on life and providing them with guidance in how to live their lives.

This year the Timmins Police Force is coming on board with the project with the hope of fostering improvement in the relationship between the local youth and the police.

The program would not be where it is today without the support of the Moose Cree First Nation, Northern Stores of Moose Factory, and the Ontario Northland railway company that all contributed to Project George.

Sadly, those who took their lives will never be brought back but that doesn't mean the fight has been lost. Each troubled youth who goes through the program, learns about their ancestral traditions, and builds up their self-respect is another life saved by the Project George.

For more info or to make a contribution to the project, go to [MooseCree.com](http://MooseCree.com)

“THE YOUTH ARE TAUGHT NUMEROUS ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING HOW TO SET TRAPS, PREPARE MOOSE MEAT, ICE FISH ALONG THE ONAKAWANA RIVER AND SNOWMOBILE.”

are missing. He told Cheechoo, they need to be shown their traditional ways by going out into the bush and learning ancestral practices of hunting and fishing.

On the same day, a local youth George Cheechoo approached Charlie asking him to take him and a few others out to the bush because they had no one else to do it for them. The first time they went to the bush, George was the only one involved; today three others are working for the project.

Over the past three years, the project has grown and become a program for troubled youth from the Moose Cree First Nation as well as those living off-reserve in Moose Factory.

Many of the youth come from homes torn apart by alcohol and drug abuse. “These are the kids who are left behind,” explained Charlie. “They don't play sports, they don't show up to community events – these are the kids I'm going out to get.”

Project George has events throughout the year. They include moose hunting and trapping in the winter along with goose hunting and fishing in the summer

venting them from developing a strong identity and connection to the land.

Part of the problem facing the community, according to Charlie, is that the youth are being sent the wrong message about suicide. The youth in Project George don't normally bring up the topic, but when it does come up it illustrates why they find suicide so alluring.

“The problem with Moose Factory is that everyone goes to heaven,” a local priest told Charlie, “and the children want to get there faster.” The posts





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# Free at last

## Barriere Lake activist acquitted for blockade charges

By Mark Della Posta

Norman Matchewan, a spokesperson and activist for the First Nation of Mitchikanibiko'inik of Barriere Lake, was acquitted of mischief and obstruction of justice charges on June 5, more than two years after attempting to protect his people's land from illegal logging.

According to Matchewan, he had learned that there was illegal logging going on in their territory in late August 2008. After meeting with the community, a letter was prepared informing the loggers that they had no right to work on their territory as they had been unlawfully authorized by Quebec's Ministry of Natural Resources. Matchewan and a few others, in the middle of the night, promptly went out to present the loggers with the letter.

"We found loggers working at 2 a.m.," said Matchewan. "The workers said that they weren't surprised to see

The government had never contacted the community, leaving them little choice but to abandon the campsite. They left after three days, allowing the logging company to return to work. Much to his surprise, Matchewan received a summons, over a year and a half later.

"I was surprised because the SQ officers who came out to the campsite told us they wanted to avoid charges," said Matchewan.

Will argues that the circumstances surrounding the summons were strange from the get go.

"It's absurd that it would have taken that long," said Will. "If they thought they had a basis for charges, they would have arrested him then and there. All they had was he said/she said."

According to Will, there is a significant difference between actually blocking the road and preventing access to the

"I THOUGHT THEY WERE TRYING TO CRIMINALIZE ME BECAUSE I'M ACTIVE IN PROTECTING THE COMMUNITY."

us. They just packed up their machines and left."

The next day, Matchewan and others camped out near the logging site and waited for the foreman to arrive. According to Matchewan's lawyer, Jared Will, the foreman was handed the same letter informing him that his company, AbitibiBowater, would not have the right to log without proper authorization from the government and the Mitchikanibiko'inik people.

"The foreman [Yves Paquette] just said OK, and left," said Matchewan. "We didn't block the road, we just told him he wasn't allowed to log on our territory."

site, and simply informing the foreman of the illegality of his work.

The absurdity of the charges only intensifies, as it was revealed that a film crew had recorded the interaction between Paquette and Matchewan. Despite having seen the camera crew, Paquette lied on the stand and claimed that Matchewan denied him entry to the site. Paquette also stated that there were no SQ officers on site, despite video evidence to the contrary.

Along with the basis for the charges, the timing was also questionable. Matchewan had recently become involved in the campaign to stop the Cartier Resources mining company from



Norman Matchewan

exploiting copper and nickel in the Barriere Lake region. He was issued the summons soon after.

"I thought they were trying to criminalize me because I'm active in protecting the community," said Matchewan. "There's been a lot of that in the community. People who are convicted aren't allowed to be activists or take part in any blockades."

According to Will, the town has a long history of criminalization.

"It takes a toll in the sense that it's a poor community," he said. "It's a significant burden [to have to deal with these types of charges]. The cost of fuel just to get to the courthouse is significant, especially for people from poorer communities. This is a community that has been under the boot of the government for years. Even when there are sentences, they are harsher than they normally would be."

For now, Matchewan is left to see his acquittal as a small success in the fight against the suppression of his people and their rights.

"I feel like this is a victory," he said. "Not just for me, but for all Native communities."



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## Respect our Aboriginal youth

On June 11, the First Nation Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (FNCFCS) and the Indigenous Bar Association (IBA) organized the "Our Dreams Matter Too" national walk and letter-writing campaign in order to get the federal government to respect the future of Aboriginal youth.

The event was necessary because of the attempts by the Harper government to stall progress in the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal to hear the injustices committed towards Indigenous youth.

The complaint was filed in 2007 by the FNCFCS and the Assembly of First Nations because of the discriminatory funding practices currently in place at the Department of Indian Affairs. At present, child welfare services on reserves are receiving 22% less funding than their off-reserve counterparts. Due to the underfunding of preventive services, this leads to more broken homes on reserve.

IBA President Koren Lightning-Earle said, "The statistics about Aboriginal children in Canada are dire. When it comes to Aboriginal children, Canada's words and its actions don't match up." Currently the com-

plaint is being hampered by an appeal by the federal government to have it curtailed.

"Our Dreams Matter Too" sent a strong message to Ottawa that the dreams of Aboriginal children should be given an equal chance to take part in Canada's future.

## First Peoples Festival unveils line-up

On June 18, Land InSights president André Dudemaine announced the line-up of acts for the Montreal First Peoples Festival, July 31 to August 8.

The First Peoples Festival will be showcasing the best of Aboriginal and First Nations performers, like internationally acclaimed Innu singer-songwriter Florent Vollant.

Vollant's show will take place on August 2 at the Place des Festivals in downtown Montreal. On August 3, there will be an electro concert featuring A Tribe Called Red along with DJ Mood and Foulane, two amazing performers from Morocco.

Along with music performances, there is also a fine selection of Aboriginal cinema from around the world that will be screened as a part of the festival. In addition, the restaurant Le Contemporain will offer an

Aboriginal menu featuring some pre-colonial Mexican and new Innu cuisine.

On August 5, there will be a testing-ground concert for young artists being co-presented by Land InSights and Musique Nomade. On the same day there will be an awards ceremony at the McCord Museum announcing the winners of the Rigoberta Menchu, Teueikan, and the Coup de cœur Télé-Québec awards.

For more info: [NativeLynx.qc.ca](http://NativeLynx.qc.ca)

## Chibougamau hostel closing

The Chibougamau Eenu Friendship Centre will be ending its hostel service effective July 1.

The hostel was one of the first services developed by the Friendship Centre in the early 1970s, and was largely funded by Health Canada until 1985. Never renewed or replaced, this lack of funding has led to a long-term growing shortfall that can no longer be absorbed by the centre.

The kitchen remains available during the day and the centre will be diversifying its services in the coming months.

People are invited to drop in for a cup of coffee and to check out the ongoing activities and events. The board and staff wishes to thank the many people who have been involved with and cared for the hostel over the past 40 years.



## Pssst...

Have any information you'd like to share with *the Nation*? Feel like there's something the rest of the Cree Nation should know?

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# Two powerful days

## Excerpts from the Mistissini hearings for Strateco's uranium exploration

By Amy German

While hearings for mining projects have become commonplace throughout Eeyou Istchee, none have been more controversial than those for Strateco's mining exploration project since the Cree campaign to stop the Great Whale project back in the 1990s.

In the last of a series of hearings that happened before the Strateco project could be granted the go-ahead, the people of Mistissini as well as a series of activists and experts spoke out against the project while Strateco President and CEO Guy Hebert and a handful of other individuals sung its praises. There to moderate was the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission which asked questions and kept a record of the proceedings.

The following is a collection of excerpts from the hearings for those who did not get a chance to listen in to the full event in Mistissini June 5-6. They are not full transcripts but rather a collection of ideas and powerful words expressed by those who decided to take a stand and speak from the heart about their land and how it should be treated.

It is followed by a full interview with Guy Hebert in reaction to the hearings.

### Sophie Coonishish, community member

This morning, when I woke up, I cried. My grandson was sleeping beside me and

all I could do was cry because I had a special request today to make.

What I'm asking today – I'm directing this to our Cree leadership who say they have a right to approach the government whenever they can – I'm asking for a moratorium on this project. I'm asking

enough information with regards to the Matoush Project.

It is important that clear and transparent information is provided to our members. Many youth question the information Strateco is proving to the community with regards to this project. The youth have many concerns with respect to the

"OUR YOUTH RECOGNIZE SOME OF THE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES OF THIS PROJECT. HOWEVER, THE LONG-TERM IMPACTS THIS PROJECT COULD POSSIBLY IMPOSE ON THE ENVIRONMENT IS THE MAIN CONCERN OF THE YOUTH."

Shawn Iserhoff, Mistissini Youth Chief

the panel to deny the request for the license to start this project.

I'm asking today because this license will allow them to kill our land and waters. If they kill the land and waters, they kill our culture. If you kill our culture, you will kill us as people. Please forgive me. If this license is granted, they will be licensed to kill us and our future generations.

### Shawn Iserhoff, Mistissini Youth Chief

There are reasons as to why the youth do not support the project. The youth have indicated that Strateco has not provided

potential impacts this project will have on the environment.

The youth believe this project will negatively affect the land, water and wildlife, or traditional use of our people. Our culture and society are deeply rooted to the environment, the youth want to protect and preserve the land for our future generations.

The main watershed for the region originates from the Otish Mountains; this area is sacred to the Cree. These waters provide nourishment for our people, the wildlife and environment.

Our youth recognize some of the employment opportunities of this project. However, the long-term impacts this pro-

ject could possibly impose on the environment is the main concern of the youth. The Albnel-Témiscamie-Otish Park is currently in the works and the Mistissini youth believe this project will pose a direct threat to long-term economic opportunities like tourism and outfitting that would showcase the culture, traditions and Cree way of life.

How will this project affect the tourism industry for the Cree? The Mistissini youth clearly do not support the project and I indicated that uranium development is not a solution to the economic and social needs of the community.

### Len Taylor, Youth pastor

Strateco wants us to accept their word that uranium exploration mining will have no impact on the environment and on our health as a people. They want us to believe that it is safe. I have studied uranium for the past three years and have read hundreds of articles and documents that show the opposite of what Strateco has presented to us, showing how exploration and mining of uranium is dangerous to the water, to the land, to the birds, to the fish, the moose, the beaver, the zooplankton, the phytoplankton and humans as well. We don't believe Strateco. They have lied too many times to us.

### Allen Matoush, community member

I am not an expert in any uranium or any signs related to it, but I am mature enough to understand the information that is given to Cree people.

When we speak about the land, our land, we need to know what we are talking about. That area where the project is, I have – I belong, belong in this. I have a really deep sense of belonging in this. Even though I am from this community, my first home is in the Otish Mountains and I know that it would not be same as the way my parents live.

So one of the instructions – they were not elaborate ones – is to treat everybody with openness and respect. Since the project started, the Strateco people, I met them 2007. They walked with me, they talked to me about that area, what is it that they want to do. I

was curious, I wanted to find out, what is it for – uranium.

Cree people in their heart want to share, and if you can just look beyond the project, that this project with all the regulations and the agreements that we have, if you look at them, they're all allowable, whether if it's uranium too.

Within that scope it's allowable and it's doable. We hear the management and the control systems that are presented. I for one have great confidence that this can be done.

And the purpose of the uranium, what is it used for? Every Cree person will pass on that torch of flame to warm up your tent or your tepee. If you can just look at it that way, enough fire to keep you warm will give you comfort and safety, and too much of it will obviously have risks on it.

And I think the same way with the uranium. If you look at the world, the world is not concerned about uranium. They're concerned about the global warming, and together the world is trying to do something about that. If there are resources on the Cree territory, then let Crees be open to be able to contribute.

### Matthew Sandy Coon-Come, community member

The Matoush – the uranium mine that they want to start, that's where my mother was from. I hunted there and go hunting once in a while there such as the winter, in the fall I would fly there.

It's true that they will be destroying the water and the animal and where the animals feed, the feeding grounds. When we go hunting there – we don't get our

animals from farms when we hunt, they are not domesticated. We have to hunt them; we have to pursue them to kill them.

Like the Rupert River, I worked there too. In the last days of the work, they didn't really do it with care in the finalization of the product. I am requesting that you end the project with care. I know that you will not wrap the project up carefully. I'm certain of it. I have my own hunting territory. It's on the north side of that area.

My father's name was Jimmy. He handed down the territory to me. My children and my grandchildren and their children will want to hunt on this land, and then I hear how severe the effects are from this kind of project. From what I've been told, it will affect generations down after me.

At first I thought I'll agree to it because if I approve, then I will be hired. I will be taken, but I am against this. I oppose this. I do not surrender my land for this to be done to it. It will fare much better if it is left to be as is.

### Ramsay Hart, MiningWatch Canada

This is a difficult situation, this licensing hearing. Licensing hearings presumably are about dealing with smaller technical details of a proposed project and yet we are being faced with fundamental questions around social acceptability of this project. For me, that leads me to conclude that previous steps in this process have failed. They have failed the people of Mistissini in terms of having their voices heard.



Ramsay Hart

"THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS AN OBLIGATION, UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, TO SEEK FREE, PRIOR AND INFORMED CONSENT BEFORE DEVELOPMENT IS APPROVED ON INDIGENOUS TERRITORY."

Ramsay Hart, MiningWatch Canada



**Cree Jobs Partnership**

"I feel privileged to be in one of the first groups to complete a D.E.P. Certification in Carpentry as part of the Cree Jobs Partnership RAC Program. I was able to get certified while continuing to work on-the-job and support my family. For me, this has been a dream come true."

*Quote from a D.E.P. Graduate in Carpentry  
with the CCDC/CBCC Construction On-the-Job RAC  
Program in Chisasibi*

## The Cree Jobs Partnership to Extend Training for Another Year as it Surpasses Targeted Training and Employment Results



The Cree Jobs Partnership is comprised of CREECO and its subsidiary companies (the Cree Construction and Development Company, Air Creebec, and Gestion ADC); Cree Human Resources Development (CHRD); and the Cree School Board, with external funding provided by the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership (ASEP) and Emploi-Québec.

The Cree Jobs Partnership has trained over 460 Aboriginal individuals, exceeding its established training target by 10%. Of these trainees, 391 had long-term sustainable employment by the end of the program, exceeding the established employment target by nearly 30%. The Cree Jobs Partnership provided 20 institutional and 20 on-the-job training opportunities in the construction, food and catering, and airline industries to members of all nine of the Cree Communities, resulting in a student retention rate of 93 percent.

As part of this training, 53 trainees received official D.E.P. certification from the Cree School Board in the areas of carpentry, cooking, and food and beverage services while working on-the-job with CCDC and Gestion ADC as part of the Cree Jobs Partnership Prior Skills Recognition (RAC) program. The RAC program allows workers to receive official recognition for prior skills and competencies obtained through on-the-job experience while receiving additional personalized training to pass the remaining modules necessary to obtain their D.E.P. certification.

The Cree Jobs Partnership has brought together diverse Cree entities to work together for the social and economic benefit of the Cree people of Eeyou Istchee. The success of the first two years of the Partnership has demonstrated the Partners' successful administration of a multi-million dollar training program, leading to the Program's extension for one year until March 31st, 2013. As a major force in job creation within the Cree Territory, the Cree Jobs Partnership has set the way for future training programs that will have long-term social and economic benefits for the Cree people of Eeyou Istchee.



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of Canada



Government of Canada funding for Quebec Cree is contributed under the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership program administered by Human Resources and Social Development Canada.

MiningWatch recommended to the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) when you wrote your comprehensive study report that you had underestimated opposition to this project and that given the lack of social license, the CNSC, during its environmental assessment process, should not move forward with it. That recommendation was not considered and so now you find yourselves in a position to have to grapple with an attempt to deal with technical issues in a licensing hearing, but being faced with fundamental questions around social acceptability.

I do not agree that the CNSC does not have a mandate to deal with social acceptability. The CNSC is a federal agency. The federal government has an obligation, under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to seek free, prior and informed consent before development is approved on Indigenous territory. The CNSC is a federal agency bound by the Constitution of Canada and Section 35, which affirms Aboriginal Rights.

The CNSC is a federal department, which is bound by the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, which, from what Cree leaders have told me, is about more than just establishing formal processes for review of projects. It's about finding ways to co-manage and share responsibility for decision-making.

The CNSC also has a mandate towards sustainable development and to evaluate the health effects of specific projects. Evaluating the health effects of a project should go beyond just measuring potential exposure to radionuclides but also look at the social impacts and the social determinants of health. From our work on mining controversies around the world, MiningWatch has observed a number of social impacts from mining conflicts, the likes of which you are pushing Mistissini towards should you provide further approvals to this project. Further approval of this project could lead to legal action, and Canada has been sharply rebuked by organizations like the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination for relying on the courts to resolve disputes.

Further approval of this project would divert attention in the community to mobilizing and trying to make efforts to have their voices heard, diverting attention from other pressing social and community issues.

It could increase social divisions and tensions, and I strongly believe it would also impact on the credibility of the CNSC, on the mining sector, and of the federal government. So I do not accept that the CNSC cannot and should not examine social acceptability in your deliberation.

### **Annie Neeposh Iserhoff, community member**

I have an honorary PhD on the traditional way of life. Honorary meaning I earned it later on in life. I also have tried to practice the traditional way of life as much as possible even though I have been in school and in the workforce most of my life.

“WHY WAS THE CREE NATION OF MISTISSINI THE ONLY ONE BEING CONSULTED AND INFORMED ABOUT THE EXPLORATION AND THE POSSIBILITY OF A URANIUM MINE? SHOULDN'T WE HAVE INVOLVED THE OTHER CREE COMMUNITIES AS WAS EXPRESSED ON THE RADIOSHOW ON THE EVENING OF MAY 15, 2012 BY MEMBERS OF THE COASTAL COMMUNITIES?”

Annie Neeposh Iserhoff, community member

On a serious note, I'd like to give my respects to all who are here, the CNSC, the panel and the people who are listening to this hearing. There were a few questions that cropped up in my mind after listening to Strateco during their open house on the uranium exploration, and when the special guest, Gordon Edwards, did a presentation at the Voyager Memorial School and on the radio informing us about uranium mining, its uses and its effects.

Why was the Cree Nation of Mistissini the only one being consulted and informed about the exploration and the possibility of a uranium mine? Shouldn't

we have involved the other Cree communities as was expressed on the radio show on the evening of May 15, 2012 by members of the coastal communities?

The minute I heard that there was a chance that a uranium mine might open, my antennas went up. I did a bit of surfing on the net for information. The information was mostly negative. Should a uranium mine open, not only will it affect the tallyman and their family members but many people, as radon toxic wastes will be left behind.

Who will monitor the wastes that will be left behind when the mine closes? These wastes will be exposed to the environment for hundreds and thousands of years. The rivers, streams, and underground watershed flow from the Otish Mountains.

If this exploration goes to the next phase, that is if Strateco gets its license, won't this type of mine affect most Quebecers, as this area has the largest fresh water?

### **Justice Debassige, student activist from Mistissini**

As you know, the project is called the Matoush Project. The Matoush Project might be good for the development of our community, but not good for the wellness of our land.

For the development, the band would receive money from the project and there might be more job opportunities for the people of Mistissini. But how many jobs and how much money would we receive? These are the questions we must try to answer.



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When I went to an information session given by Strateco Uranium Mining Corporation I learned that there would be 180 jobs available for the five-year exploration phase and 300 jobs during the lifetime of the mine. But who is qualified for these jobs? Will these jobs be for us or experienced workers from other places?

That might benefit 6% of Mistissini's population and their families. That is not very much for this proposed development that has so many potential risks.

I would like to outline what some of these scientifically proven risks are. First, uranium mining leaves decaying elements such as radium, radon and polonium. These elements contaminate the environment, wildlife, and the human body more than uranium would.

These uranium decay products, the things that are left behind in the waste rock and mill tailings, is the problem, not so much the uranium itself. The radiation coming off these decay products lasts for more than 100,000 years. This contamination seeps into the ground and poisons the aquifer, the water underground. Radiation causes many different cancers, diseases and sicknesses.

I am going to ask you all a tricky question. Are these jobs and maybe a few million dollars more important than our land?

### Chief Richard Shecapio, Mistissini

It's very obvious that our people disagree with many of the presentations and the information that's been given us today,

and we're speaking today, and us as leaders of this community. So we want to say that we do not want this.

We do not approve of this. We do not want what this company is requesting for.

Even though today they sit here, and they listen to us, and they're facing us, they have their own roles and their purpose and what is expected of them in their responsibilities. They're listening to our people; they listen to us, all the comments. They want to tell you that even after this meeting, as far as we can go as leaders, that we will fight this, that there is no license granted....

The licensing of Strateco's project opens the door for uranium mining on our traditional lands, and represents the first step toward a uranium boom in this region. As said during the CNSC's presentation this morning, there are over 20 active uranium exploration projects in the region. The Cree Nation of Mistissini has also compiled a map showing many uranium claims in the Otish Mountains that touch Mistissini traditional territory as well as neighbouring traplines.

We believe that many of these claims could also become active exploration projects and possibly mines in the future if Strateco receives a license from the CNSC. The Cree Nation of Mistissini therefore feels that the most important question we need to answer is not whether we accept an exploration ramp on our traditional lands, but whether we accept uranium mining at all.

Community members have expressed a great deal of concern about

the location of Strateco's project for two main reasons. First, the project is located in the Otish Mountain drainage basin, and second, it is in close proximity to the Albanel-Témiscamie-Otish Park.

The Otish Mountains are the source of the water that supports our people. It is a sacred place for the Cree. To protect the water we drink we need to be very careful about the kind of development we are willing to allow in these mountains.

To protect these mountains for future generations we are working with the provincial government to open the Albanel-Témiscamie -Otish Park. This park will be negatively impacted by this project, as will ecotourism and the revenue it could generate for our community.

The bottom line is that uranium development and the ATO Park cannot co-exist.

We would like to make it clear that the Cree Nation Mistissini is not opposed to mineral exploration and mining. We have recently signed an Impact and Benefits Agreement with a mining company and have had a positive long-term relationship with another mining company in the past. The Cree Nation of Mistissini, however, does not believe that uranium development is an activity that is consistent with our role as responsible stewards of this land....

Finally, I am here today to serve notice that the Cree Nation of Mistissini will do whatever it takes to stop uranium development on our traditional lands.



Chief Richard Shecapio

"COMMUNITY MEMBERS HAVE EXPRESSED A GREAT DEAL OF CONCERN ABOUT THE LOCATION OF STRATECO'S PROJECT FOR TWO MAIN REASONS. FIRST, THE PROJECT IS LOCATED IN THE OTISH MOUNTAIN DRAINAGE BASIN, AND SECOND, IT IS IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO THE ALBANEL-TÉMISCAMIE-OTISH PARK."

Chief Richard Shecapio, Mistissini



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## Day 2

### William Mianscum, Grand Council of the Crees (speaking on his own behalf)

I am in support of allowing Strateco Resources the licence to proceed with further advanced exploration on the Matoush Project. I believe in resource development in our territory, Eeyou Istchee, so long as we have a say on how development will take place; so long as we have a role in the monitoring processes of resource development, we must put our systems to the test.

Our Cree mining policy, Sections 24 of the James Bay Northern Quebec Agreement, deals with processes for environmental protection in our territory, Eeyou Istchee.

I'm sorry once again.

Uranium mining today is the most regulated in the mining industry. There are nuclear watchdogs that are empowered to shut down exploration works, mining operations, if they see regulations and safety nets, networks breached.

### Rachel MacLeod, community member

I am a mother of four and I speak here on their behalf, and I stand here against uranium.

I have lived in my community all my life, but had the opportunity to live down south for about five years. But home is really where the heart is. My son is eight years old and last year, we celebrated his first kill on Goose Break.

Goose Break happens in the spring when the geese fly here from the south. And 10 to 20 years from now, will we be celebrating our grandchildren or great-grandchildren's first kill? Will we be able to go off into the bush for our annual goose hunt or moose hunt?

Will it be safe?

### Jason Coonishish, Public Health Department, Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay

We must continue to ask who will bear the human cost of economic development in the North? The northern population are already in a disadvantage due

to their remote location and suffer considerable health and social inequities as compared to the rest of Quebec.

Profiting from the natural resources and tourism potential in the North at the expense of these northern populations would be unjust, further increase inequities rather than helping those who need it most.

We must continue to ask: Can health and social services cope with these increased demands? Can institutions created through the provisions of the James Bay Northern Quebec Agreement, such as the Cree Health Board, have to be examined to see if their mandate and jurisdiction need to be redefined and whether resources available will be adequate to do the additional work that will likely arise from health, social and public health challenges related to the new

"I BELIEVE IN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN OUR TERRITORY, EYYOU ISTCHEE, SO LONG AS WE HAVE A SAY ON HOW DEVELOPMENT WILL TAKE PLACE; SO LONG AS WE HAVE A ROLE IN THE MONITORING PROCESSES OF RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, WE MUST PUT OUR SYSTEMS TO THE TEST."

William Mianscum,  
Grand Council of the Crees



William Mianscum

ongoing development projects in the North. It is important to minimize the potential risks and maximize the benefits for the Cree communities as a whole.

### Elder Paul Dixon, Waswanipi

Bush life will always be part of our life, it's always been part of our past and it's always been part of our future. In a way I'm glad that I'm here, and it's very hard for me to trust the non-Natives, you know? Looking at it historically, what happened.

We Aboriginal people have always been begging to the white man and then we could never ask for anything. They clear-cut our ancestral lands and I have so much concern about this mine. And it's not just a copper or a gold mine we're talking about, we're talking about a uranium mine.

I was telling a friend back there that guys like that don't even read Cree, only talk Cree, you know? They don't know the figures, they don't know the scientific studies. They don't even know an ordinary scientist from a top geologist. I know for sure that if we were all top geologists, and you were all top geologists up there, and everybody was in a room, we'd dead set against this uranium mine in Mistissini.

It's always a mind game with non-Natives. They're only aware of the environment. Historically you've got to look at unless you're ignorant to the history – you've got to look. The non-Natives only cared about the environment, or woke up to it after they boiled a frog. That's sad.

They never have and never will listen to a poor man's wisdom, and this is what we're talking about here. But the one thing that I had was – I'd like to say I'm blessed that I have convinced non-Natives and white people much like – once I am one-on-one on them, no matter what. I mean this white guy was dead set against hydro – I mean he was against hydro projects because it would bring economy – he was a Royal Bank manager. After a couple of beer and preaching at him for 10 years in our village, while he was drunk he told me I hope the projects never get built because I explained our way of life to him.

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## Jeff Spencer, community member

I have an unbiased opinion. I have no stake in this other than my children and their children, my in-laws, what I saw the value – my father-in-law was a big part of the federal cases for the forestry.

He believed in his land, he believed in his people as I believe in these people. I want you to take all this home with you. You probably say: “Who cares, it’s just a guy from the community.” I am not from the community but I am the community because I’ve been here, this is my life here.

Politically, Nova Scotia and B.C. said no (to uranium mining in their provinces). You heard the Chief last night; you should have packed up and left right then because the political decision was no.

The Deputy Grand Chief supported the Chief in that position. The political decision was no. We govern this land, this is our land, our people control this land,

“THE POLITICAL DECISION WAS NO. WE GOVERN THIS LAND, THIS IS OUR LAND, OUR PEOPLE CONTROL THIS LAND, YOU HEARD THE ELDER, PAUL DIXON SAY, ‘THE THOUSAND YEARS OF YOUR UNIVERSITY, PHD’S OR WHATEVER WILL NEVER TEACH YOU ANYTHING, DR. MCDILL, ABOUT OUR LAND.’ LIVE IT.”

Jeff Spencer, community member

you heard the Elder, Paul Dixon say, “The thousand years of your university, PhD’s or whatever will never teach you anything, Dr. McDill, about our land.” Live it.

I’ve lived it, I’ve been out on the land with the people, I’ve lived in the bush, I’ve seen what beauty there is. You talk about a beautiful morning this morning, well, I certainly would love my grandchildren to live that beautiful life and see that morning.

To read the full transcripts from the June 5-6 hearings go to:

[www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca/eng/commission/pdf/2012-06-05-Transcription-Hearing-Final-e.pdf](http://www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca/eng/commission/pdf/2012-06-05-Transcription-Hearing-Final-e.pdf)

[www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca/eng/commission/pdf/2012-06-06-Transcription-Hearing-Final-e.pdf](http://www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca/eng/commission/pdf/2012-06-06-Transcription-Hearing-Final-e.pdf)

## Standing firm

### Deputy Grand Chief Iserhoff supports Mistissini’s decision on uranium mining

By Jesse Staniforth

Ashley Iserhoff, Deputy Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees, was direct in his statement supporting the Chief and Council of Mistissini in their opposition to the proposed Matoush uranium exploration project and mine.

At the end of a long day of public hearings held on June 5 by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Council, Iserhoff responded to the statement by Mistissini Chief Richard Shecapio rejecting the advanced exploration project and calling for a moratorium of any uranium mining on Cree traditional lands as well as everywhere in the province of Quebec.

Speaking to the hearings, Shecapio said, “For the Crees of Mistissini, the land is a school of its own and the resources of the land are the material

and supplies they need. Cree traplines are the classrooms. What is taught on these traplines to the youth is the Cree way of life, which means living in harmony with nature. This form of education ensures our survival as a people [... It] teaches us to be humble, respectful, responsible, disciplined, independent, sharing and compassionate.”

Principal among the concerns of the community of Mistissini, Shecapio said, was the uncertainty that they could maintain the safety of their food supply in an area where uranium exploration or mining was taking place.

“Because our people are still active on the land, hunting, trapping and consuming the animals,” he explained, “we are concerned that traditional foods may

become contaminated with radionuclides, posing a threat to those who eat them. High levels of radionuclides in moose and caribou tissues have been reported in animals near uranium mines. This indirect exposure can lead to serious health issues for the people who eat contaminated animals.”

In his statement to the hearings, Iserhoff spoke at length about the issue, touching on a variety of subjects. After first commending the courage and determination of those who had spoken that day, noting that they “demonstrate[d] the vitality and good health of the community of Mistissini, which is its strength”.

Iserhoff went on to comment that it is not only the – very valid – concerns



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- Strong record of success in financial management;
- Proven ability or potential to be effective in the Cree Nation – able to grasp the issues that relate to First Nation health and social services;
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Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay

about food safety that leave many in the Cree Nation uncomfortable with the idea of uranium exploration and mining.

"The life circle impacts of the nuclear field give rise to serious concerns among the Crees that their environment and health will be subjected to severe repercussions for both this and future generations," he said. "There exists a long history of mining in Eeyou Istchee, but not with uranium mining. It is of crucial importance to take into account the fact that this type of mineral development would be a first in Quebec."

Moreover, Iserhoff said that another major concern was that an approval for the application by Strateco would open the door to greater uranium development and mining. One mine on its own was enough of a worry for the community, but the cumulative possibility of many was even more concerning.

At the present time, said Iserhoff, the Grand Council of the Crees believed "a life circle approach to evaluate the impacts and the risks as well as the costs and benefits would be more appropriate and would determine the cumulative impacts of uranium development more clearly. To limit the review to the exploration stage and its matters of regulatory interests does not allow our people to address all their concerns."

Iserhoff added, "The Cree Nation of Mistissini must be given the opportunity to give or withhold their free, prior and informed consent to the uranium development. They need to know in what manner their traditional territories and natural resources will be affected. [...] Any project of this type must have the support of the Cree Nation."

Iserhoff also underlined how necessary it is for anyone who wishes to undertake uranium mining in the Cree territories to secure the trust and confidence of the Cree people. The simple guarantee of safety by the CNSC and Strateco Mines, he explained, were not enough to support the faith of the people of Mistissini.

"In the last decades," he said, referring to the rapid expansion of mining and other resource development in the Eeyou Istchee since the late 1970s, "our people have gone through many

rapid changes that have affected our traditional culture. People have seen the pristine environment modified by various types of contaminants stem from the cumulative impacts of various development projects."

Mentioning the longstanding fallout that resulted from the mercury contamination of Cree communities by earlier mines, Iserhoff stressed, "Whether or not the impacts are low or high, the Cree remain mistrustful and this lack of trust will transform their behaviour and relationship with the land. The nourishing land will become a threat, and weaken their traditional way of life on the land."



Ashley Iserhoff, Deputy Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees

Iserhoff underlined, "We need to lessen the threat, both the perceived and physical impact on our traditional way of life brought about by uranium exploration and exploitation development on our lands. [...] Serious concerns exist regarding ionizing radiation, future atmospheric releases of radon gas, the contamination of groundwater and surface water by radionuclide, heavy metals and other contaminants, and of course the potential contamination of the wildlife and vegetation. A large part of land could be affected, not just by the physical impacts themselves of the project, but by the perceptions and reactions of our people in relation to the impacts of the project and others like it."

Noting that the Cree Nation has been, and remains, open to mining development within its territory, Iserhoff stressed that there was nothing frivolous about the Cree people's concerns around the Matoush project. To emphasize the extent to which the Nation of Mistissini has informed itself, he pointed to the series of information sessions and work-group meetings held in 2011, along with a survey of on the prospects of uranium exploration and mining in Mistissini traditional lands – which showed that a majority of community members opposed such work.

"We understand that the Cree Nation of Mistissini considers that the information presented by the project proponent to date have not materially improved the community's perception of the project or met with the community's expectations," said Iserhoff. "The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) has already stated its support to the Cree Nation of Mistissini for its position regarding the project. Our support for the Cree Nation of Mistissini's position has not changed, and we now wish to reiterate our support."

Also giving a presentation the same day was Chibougamau Mayor Manon Cyr, who noted that the municipality and others nearby were founded on mineral development. Cyr said that city officials had had ample opportunities to see for themselves that the project was safe, and would harm the environment, workers or the general public.

However, Cyr stressed that her support was only for the proposed advanced uranium exploration, and said that before a mining operation was to occur, a full and rigorous environmental impact assessment would have to be undertaken.

She ended her presentation on a strange note, citing a flyer that had been delivered to all city officials calling for a moratorium on uranium mining in Quebec due to health and environmental risks. The information contained in this flyer, she said, was troubling, and she closed her speech by saying she would like to know whether or not the warnings were based on fact.

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# Following up

## Reaction from Strateco's Guy Hebert after the hearings

By Amy German

Having maintained all along that Strateco's uranium mining exploration project in the Otish Mountains was not a threat to the surrounding environment, Guy Hebert seemed quite weary of what had transpired in Mistissini in the days following the two-day hearings.

While the President and CEO had anticipated some opposition to the project, what he didn't see coming was who this opposition would be.

"The big surprise for us was that in Mistissini many high school students were targeted by the anti-uranium and anti-nuke activists. We find this very shocking," said Hebert.

In particular, Hebert found it disturbing that the local high school had received repeated visits from activists

Hebert expressed deep frustration as he felt that the people of Mistissini, the youth in particular, were subjected to very one-sided information that was meant to scare them. Furthermore, he said what they were shown were images from previous eras that did not reflect the industry today.

And, Edwards was not the only person trying to dupe the public into rejecting the uranium project, Hebert said.

"When you see who is behind that with Dr. (Isabelle) Gingras, who is a psychiatrist, they really know which buttons to push to generate fear. This was really unacceptable. And, these kids are taking these pictures home and are probably having nightmares based on something that isn't true," said Hebert.

**"THE BIG SURPRISE FOR US WAS THAT IN MISTISSINI MANY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WERE TARGETED BY THE ANTI-URANIUM AND ANTI-NUKE ACTIVISTS."**

like Dr. Gordon Edwards, President of the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility. And, after seeing what Edwards had presented to the students based on what he presented at the hearings, Hebert expressed his disgust that the youth had been subjected to that kind of subject matter.

"Their other focus was to show them a lot of atomic bomb processes. There were kids who came forward and said that 100% of the uranium produced in Canada goes for atomic bomb production. They actually said this.

"And, that wasn't the worst to it. There were people coming up, many of them parents or teenagers who were saying that there would be nuclear fission meltdowns at the mine much like what happened at Chernobyl. It was so far away from anything that could possibly happen in reality," said Hebert.

Hebert was also perturbed by the fact that many of the students spoke about atomic bombs, health concerns from nuclear bomb fallout and nuclear meltdowns, problems that he feels are unrelated to Strateco's project.

From what he saw, Hebert said it was clear that none of the scenarios these youth were presenting were even possibilities from his project and the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission confirmed that.

"But you know, it's not only Mistissini and it is not because they are Cree or because they are young (that this went the way it did). The exact same thing happened with the people of Sept-Îles and another 300 municipalities, they (activists) went to Gaspésie with the same kind of information.

"For me this group of activists is insane because they target kids. If they want to do that in Sept-Îles, I don't mind. But if they do that with kids in high



Strateco's Guy Hebert

school and people in a small community and now they are all afraid," said Hebert.

It was not that Hebert wished to dismiss the fears of the people, but this particular hearing was supposed to focus on technical aspects of the project and instead the focus was on the social acceptability of what Hebert described as misinformation.

At the same time, he was equally frustrated by the fact that others had been allowed unlimited access to the community to spread this misinformation.

"We have been denied access to the kids over the years by the teachers and so it is like having a hockey team on the ice playing against open nets and then when another team shows up they refuse to play," said Hebert.

Because those against the project have had the opportunity to address the community's youth in their classrooms, Hebert feels Strateco deserves the same opportunities to present their side.

As for Chief Richard Shecapio's vow to fight the project until the bitter end, Hebert chose not to respond.

He did, however, offer this: "You know, it is not unanimous in the community, there are some people who support the project and then there are others that work for us. We have contractors and contracts.

"I will not respond about the Chief because he has the right to say what he wants to say. But, we are living in a place where there are laws and so it is up to Quebec to decide. I think it is all going to be politics really."

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# No way

## Mistissini uranium opponents walk together and rock together

By Jesse Staniforth

With the theme “Together Against Uranium”, a combination protest-rally walk and benefit concert brought out some 350 people in Mistissini to express their opposition to the Strateco mining company’s application for a license to carry out advanced uranium exploration.

Occurring on June 4, the day before the three-day set of public hearings on the issue held in Chibougamau by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Council (CNSC), the rally brought people from Mistissini as well as surrounding areas, including Sept-Îles, Minganie and Chibougamau. Protesters set out from the Neoskwekau Complex at 6 pm, before regrouping for the concert at 7:30.

“People came from all over Quebec – it wasn’t just a local event. We were very happy with the turnout,” said Mistissini Youth Chief Shawn Iserhoff, one of the organizers of both events. “People came together for the common cause – the common good. They made their own signs and we went around the community for about a half an hour. There were lots of people who were parked by the side of the road, and other people who couldn’t walk very well, like Elders. They were shouting out in support of us.”

Iserhoff says that organizers decided to pair the rally with a concert both for publicity and to help cover the expenses of maintaining the uranium-opposition project. The night’s entertainment was headlined by the Juno Award-winning Cree rock band CerAmoney, who have been vocal in their opposition to uranium mining in Eeyou Istchee and to Premier Jean Charest’s Plan Nord development strategy.

The concert drew between 300 and 350 people, not all of them the same as those who had been in the rally. “Some people went home after the walk,” said

Iserhoff. “But then other people came for the concert afterwards.”

There is the possibility that Iserhoff will help organize similar concerts in other towns and cities in Quebec. “That’s something on the table,” he said, “though we don’t have any concrete plan for it so far.”

“PEOPLE CAME TOGETHER FOR THE COMMON CAUSE – THE COMMON GOOD. THEY MADE THEIR OWN SIGNS AND WE WENT AROUND THE COMMUNITY FOR ABOUT A HALF AN HOUR.”



On behalf of the organizers, Iserhoff expressed gratitude to all the people who came out to support the cause at the rally or at the concert.

It underlines Mistissini’s opposition to uranium mining and uranium exploration on Cree lands.

“Given the public meetings that have been held here,” Iserhoff said, referring to the CNSC hearings in Chibougamau, “it does seem like the majority of people in Mistissini are opposed to the project. Right now, the stance is pretty strong in the community. We want to have development that’s sustainable,

but uranium is just something that should be out of the picture. There’s no social acceptance from the community at this point. We hope [that CNSC has] heard our voice.”

The day after the event, at the first day of the CNSC hearings, Mistissini Chief Richard Shecapio released a statement of total opposition to the project and called for a moratorium on uranium mining and exploration, both on Cree lands as well as throughout the entire province of Quebec. He stated that the position of the Crees is one of humility, responsibility and stewardship toward the land that has always been theirs and has always been central to their culture, people, traditions and history. Because Crees remain active on the land and continue to hunt, trap and consume animals living in the surrounding areas, the threat of radioactive contamination is far too great for the Chief and council to accept.

Iserhoff, Chief Shecapio and council, and the rest of Mistissini must now wait 30 days for the licensing decisions from the CNSC, as well as for the official Quebec government response. He’s anxious to hear their response, but also points to the clarity of the wording in the COMEX environmental review report for Matoush Uranium Exploration Project.

That report reads, “[Strateco] must obtain the Crees’ consent through the Mistissini Band Council with regard to the project’s social acceptability [and] must enter into a written agreement to that effect with the band council or with another body designated by the band council.”

“In terms of that consent,” said Iserhoff, “Strateco doesn’t have it. It’s been made pretty clear by the band council and the people.”

# Solidifying the Cree culture

Aanischaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute celebrates its grand opening

By Mark Della Posta



Waswanipi students recite Lord's Prayer in Cree



Beaver roasting over a fire in Ouje-Bougoumou cultural village



Photos by Mark Della Posta and courtesy of ACCI

**I**ts impact is unquestionable. It sends a clear, and powerful message, that the Cree culture and people are characterized by a lastingness that has defined their past, and will continue to define their future. The Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute (ACCI), standing boldly at the centre of Oujé-Bougoumou, will serve to strengthen, solidify and preserve the Cree culture for generations to come.

The ACCI, designed by Native architect Douglas Cardinal through visioning sessions and collaboration with Elders, is inspired by the traditional *sabtuan*. Massive spruce beams make up the skeleton of the building, as they come together and crisscross over 20 feet in the air. Natural light flows through large skylights above the gathering area and the impressive glass walls on both ends.

The highlight of the ACCI is a remarkable exhibit featuring important aspects of traditional Cree life. Through the acquisition of Cree artifacts from museums around Canada and the world, the ACCI exhibit houses hunting equipment, clothing, tools and a plethora of items used in daily Cree life.

The exhibit also houses a massive *Odeyak*, a half-canoe and half-kayak, a testament to the five-year battle waged by the Eeyou and Inuit peoples to save the Great Whale River from hydroelectric projects. The *Odeyak* was so large, that the

**"INSTEAD OF GOING DOWN SOUTH OR TO EUROPE TO SEE WORLD MUSEUMS, THEY CAN GO IN THEIR OWN BACKYARD. IT'S A GOOD WAY OF PROMOTING CONFIDENCE AND BEING PROUD OF WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOUR IDENTITY IS."**

museum was actually built around it, as it never would have fit through the doors.

Based on the concept of *aanischa*, the main purpose of the ACCI is to create a bridge between older and newer generations of Cree, in order to ensure the survival of its traditions, values and to pass down knowledge from its Elders.

In his dedication speech during the grand opening on June 8, Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come emphasized the importance of maintaining the bond between young Crees and their community.

"We have learned that when we send our children to school, although being a good thing in that they are getting an education, they are deprived of being out on the land, and vdon't fully understand their parents' way of life," he said.



Traditional dancing in Chief Billy Diamond Hall

"Instead of going down south or to Europe to see world museums, they can go in their own backyard. It's a good way of promoting confidence and being proud of who you are and what your identity is."

As well as being a bridge between generations, Coon Come described the ACCI as a bridge between the Cree and the rest of the world.

"We have to think beyond our borders," he said. "With the government of Quebec planning to open up the territory with the Plan Nord.... there will be people coming in who won't know who we are. This building will open the door for understanding... and a better appreciation of our history."

The dedication ceremony also included a speech from Hydro-Québec President Thierry Vandal, who recounted memories of the late Chief Billy Diamond, who had taught him the importance of protecting the Cree lands during a fishing trip the two took together.

Assistant Deputy Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada Elizabeth Châtillon also spoke, fighting back tears in an emotional moment, reiterating the Prime Minister's apology for the residential school system.

The institute is the culmination of nearly 15 years of work. Abel Bosum, director of the ACCI fundraising committee and who donated his time to the cause, described the process as "an emotional roller coaster".

"It was difficult at first to convince the Elders on the idea of a museum because of respect for things that had passed," he said. "We had to sell them on the idea that this was for the betterment of the Cree people."

Along with money from the Cree Nation, Bosum went on to explain that the nearly \$16 million project was only possible with the help of government funding and Hydro-Québec.

# NHL stars

## Dwight King and Jordan Nolan, unlikely Stanley Cup heroes

by Daniel Coyle

February 10, 2012, is a date that will likely be celebrated annually by Los Angeles Kings forwards Dwight King and Jordan Nolan. It was on this date that King and Nolan were called up from the minor league AHL Manchester Monarchs to join the LA Kings on their drive towards their first Stanley Cup victory.

The moves to bring King, a Métis from Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan, and Nolan, an Ojibway from Garden River, Ontario, were neither heralded nor necessarily expected to last. At the time King and Nolan were called up, the Kings ranked dead last in the league in goals scored, and were in danger of slipping out of the hunt for a playoff spot.

Compounding this was an injury to third line veteran centre Jarret Stoll, which finally forced Kings' management to make on-ice personnel changes that would both inject size and toughness into the lineup and kickstart the Kings' offence.

Enter Nolan and King.

The two Native youngsters had an immediate impact on the ice with King scoring a goal and setting up Nolan's game winner in a game versus the Dallas Stars – the pair's second game with LA this season. But the Kings continued to struggle throughout February, falling out of the eighth and final playoff spot, leading to much hand wringing by fans and media alike.

It was at that point in the season when things started to click for the Kings, and for King. The club put together a 9-2 start to the month of March, which coincided with King's stretch of seven points in nine games, including a game-winning goal against the Nashville Predators on March 17 – a goal set up by fellow new arrival and new linemate Jeff Carter.

While King was finding chemistry with his two superstar linemates, Carter and Mike Richards, Nolan was getting comfortable in his role on the team's fourth line. While not quite as glamorous

defending Western Conference champion Vancouver Canucks. It was a classic case of glamour versus guts. The Canucks, with marquee players like Roberto Luongo and the Sedin twins,



Dwight King celebrates a goal with Mike Richards

"CRAZY THINGS HAPPEN IN HOCKEY. JUST HAPPY TO BE A PART OF IT RIGHT NOW. ... IT'S A DREAM. YOU WANT TO BE PART OF THE STANLEY CUP PLAYOFFS. TO BE A CONTRIBUTOR IS EVEN BETTER. EVERYTHING IS COMING AROUND."

a role as that of a scoring winger, Nolan's big body presence proved effective in defending against opposing scoring lines and adding spark to a lineup that was finally starting to click in the final games of the regular season.

Entering the playoffs, few fans or oddsmakers gave the eighth-seeded Kings much of a chance against the

were expected by many to make a return to the Stanley Cup Final, where they lost in 2011 to the Boston Bruins. While the Kings enjoyed solid support at home, selling every seat to every home game throughout the regular season, few fans outside of Southern California had seen them play.

That all changed as the Kings defeated the Canucks in five games, followed by a four-game sweep of the St. Louis Blues and a five-game series victory over the surprising Phoenix Coyotes, earning the team a spot in the Stanley Cup Finals for the first time since 1993.

Again, Nolan and King played key roles on a Kings team that was quickly evolving into a squad that could produce offence and lay a dirty beating on opposing players.

With five goals, including a two-goal performance in Game One versus Phoenix, King recorded the second highest number of goals ever by a Kings' rookie in the playoffs. Equally important was King's physical presence down low in the offensive zone, where he gave opposing defensemen little room to manoeuvre and was a constant threat in front of the net.



Jordan Nolan with parents Ted and Sandra

"I would not have believed them, that's for sure," said King when asked for his reaction to becoming a Stanley Cup champion by NHL.com.

"Crazy things happen in hockey. Just happy to be a part of it right now. ... It's a dream. You want to be part of the Stanley Cup Playoffs. To be a contributor is even better. Everything is coming around."

Throughout the playoffs, Nolan continued to play a key fourth line role, agitating opposing forwards and providing energy as required.

As he was being interviewed by Hockey Night in Canada following the Kings' Cup clinching victory over the New Jersey Devils, Nolan's father, former NHL Coach of the Year Ted Nolan was by his side, holding back emotion while Jordan took in the moment with awe.

"It's definitely unbelievable," said Jordan. "To come up from Manchester at the end of the American League and then to come here as an eighth-seed team and then to win the Stanley Cup, you can't put it into words."



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# Passing on the past

## Legends series captures Elders' storytelling prowess on camera

By Brandon Judd

Beesum Communications is launching its Legends series, which aims to immortalize the Cree legends by filming Elders telling the stories and posting them online.

The initiative began in early 2011, after Cree expressed fears youth, who are less interested in the stories that have instructed and encapsulated Cree life for centuries, would not be able to pass on the stories to their children.

"It's something we're very proud of, and something we hope will be useful for education, for the Cree School Board, and to bring Elders together with the youth, again," said Michel Goyette, who helped spearhead the project for Beesum. "We're hoping it will outgrow our expectations."

Beesum Communications, which owns *the Nation*, invested 60% of the funds for the project, while the remaining 40% came from Heritage Canada

countless times, the presence of a camera was a new – and, for some, unnatural – guest in the ritual.

The way the Elders weave their words in Cree, it creates a very vivid picture in your mind: of how life was, the way of the land, and how people were in the old days

and the Niskamoon Corporation. A cameraman met Elders of Eeyou Itschee, each of whom tell a different legend. While the Elders have told the stories

"At first it felt very weird, because the Elders aren't used to being filmed," said Brian Webb, a Cree language specialist who filmed and helped translate



Elder Joe Guanish

the stories. “But they got used to it eventually. For them, storytelling is so natural. If they weren’t recorded, I’d be the one carrying the stories. But this way, they’ll be kept for generations.”

The legends have already been kept for generations, in many cases because of their power as a teaching tool. Goyette says the stories carry useful lessons for any listeners.

“These legends, when you listen to them, may sound absurd when you see a bear killing a child and the parents are left with no child, but there’s a meaning behind it,” he said. “Why were parents telling legends like that? They wanted to tell kids not to wander too far off or run off because nature could kill you. There’s always a lesson in a legend – it’s not a true story; it’s a designed legend. It was a way for Elders to teach youth.”

“The Bear and the Child,” is just one of the eight stories currently online. Others include “Adrift on the Bay”, “Falling Through the Ice”, and “The Death of Chikabash”. Each contains a pertinent lesson that was passed down generations.

In addition to the online presence, *the Nation* will be printing these legends in forthcoming issues. Each will take up a one-page spread, and promise to be intriguing and, in many cases, riveting stories.

Webb spoke in awe of the elaborate vocabulary the Elders employ, which, he says, is increasingly rare in modern Cree.

The videos, however, offer an additional boon: the lyricism of the Elders’ storytelling style. Webb spoke in awe of the elaborate vocabulary they employ, which, he says, is increasingly rare in modern Cree. Moreover, the style with which they present their story – intonation, tension, and sound effects – repre-

sented an art form to which few are dedicated today.

“The way the Elders weave their words in Cree, it creates a very vivid pic-

ture in your mind: of how life was, the way of the land, and how people were in the old days,” Webb said.

Now, thanks to the camera, the Elders’ storytelling prowess is as visible – and imitable – as the content itself.

Webb has worked as a Cree translator for 18 years, and headed up the

effort to transcribe the legends into three written languages: syllabic Cree, Roman Cree and English. All three subtitles are available online, meaning the stories are highly accessible to the community, and to other Canadians.

For Webb, who has spent years helping to expand the Cree language to incorporate more modern terms – coining, for example, the word for Internet, which he derived from a word for the spiritual communication that took place during a ceremony called “the shaking tent” – the very foundation of the language can be seen in the Elders’ stories.

A path to the past, in more ways than one.

The legends can be found at [www.beesum-communications.com/legends](http://www.beesum-communications.com/legends), or in these pages in the coming months.



Image from the legend “The Bear and the Child”

# EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY



James Bay Cree Communications Society  
Société des Communications Cries de la Baie James

23 Petawabano St, Mistissini, Québec, G0W 1C0  
Telephone: 418-923-3191 Facsimile: 418-923-2088  
Website: [www.creeradiationetwork.com](http://www.creeradiationetwork.com)

**POSITION:** Production Manager  
**STATUS:** Full-time Permanent

**PLACE OF WORK:** Mistissini  
**HRS/WEEK:** 35 Hours

**SUMMARY:** Under the direction of the Executive Director of the James Bay Cree Communications Society, the Production Manager shall be responsible for the planning and implementation of all radio programming of Cree Radio Network of the James Bay Cree Communications Society

The Production Manager will:

- Manage and Supervise all production employees
- Maintain and validate program schedules, contracts/ads
- Prepare and maintain on-air schedules, assignments
- Chair weekly/daily production meetings
- Assist in the preparation and administration of the production budget
- Maintain station programming policies on content and objectives
- Assist in development of the JBCCS work plans
- Review and approve special broadcasts according to budgets/plans
- Prepare and submit quarterly activity reports
- Publicize and promote the activities and services of the Cree Radio Network.
- Act as liaison between the local and regional radio stations
- Ensure the Cree Radio Network is properly maintained

- Make recommendations to ensure proper function of the radio operations including programming, personnel and equipment
- Keep informed of current affairs, music for programming
- Conduct training needs assessments for Production staff and assist in preparation of training plans
- Upon request carry out other tasks as assigned from time to time by the Executive Director

## QUALIFICATIONS:

- Knowledge of the spoken Cree is essential, written Cree would definitely be an asset
- English is essential, French would be an asset
- Degree in communications or equivalent experience in radio programming management
- Leadership qualities and working well with others
- Administrative and management skills
- Knowledge of digital technology
- Must have a valid driver's license

**SALARY:** To commensurate with qualifications

Interested candidates should forward their curriculum vitae by or before July 11, 2012 to:

**Elaine MacLeod**

Executive Director

James Bay Cree Communications Society  
23 Petawabano Street  
Mistissini, Quebec, G0W 1C0

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"WE'RE ALWAYS SUSPICIOUS. IT'S A SHAME THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD HAVE EXCLUDED FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE AND I WOULD HOPE THAT HE REVISITS THE ISSUE."



## Business as usual

### Aboriginals excluded from hunting and angling advisory panel

Story and photo by Mark Della Posta

On May 30, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced the creation of an advisory panel on hunting and angling, that would inform and give advice to Environment Canada on how to help conservation efforts in the country. Curiously, Aboriginal groups were excluded from that panel.

"They absolutely should have included Aboriginal groups to this committee," said Brian Craik, director of federal relations for the Grand Council of the Crees. "You look at the organizations that make up the panel and it looks like an old boys' club."

The panel is made up of various fishing and wildlife conservation groups from across Canada, as well as advocates for the companies in the hunting and fishing industry. It includes organizations such as the Fur Institute of Canada, the Canadian Shooting Sports Association, and the Atlantic and Pacific Salmon Federations.

According to the press release from the Prime Minister's Office, the panel will help "ensure decisions on issues such as endangered species, wetland protection and nature conservation benefit from a balanced perspective".

Although the panel doesn't include any Aboriginal representation, Environment Minister Peter Kent argues that they are not being kept out of the process all together.

"The hunting and fishing advisory panel was struck to create a dialogue with this important segment of the population who have previously been under-

consulted, and to address issues with hunters and anglers who are regulated by permits and licenses," he said. "First Nations have constitutional rights to hunt and fish, and are routinely engaged in consultations on a wide array of subjects including hunting, fishing, and conservation through AANDC (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada) as well as Environment Canada, CEAA (Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency) and Parks Canada on all policy matters that impact Aboriginal lands, customs and way of life."

Not everyone, however, is convinced that this panel will effectively consult and deal with Aboriginal groups when attempting to affect conservation practices in this country.

"I'd say that's utter nonsense," said Jean Crowder, NDP Member of Parliament and opposition critic on Aboriginal affairs. "The problem is that [the government] seems to think that this panel will come to decisions, and then go to Aboriginal groups with [what they've come up with]. It's just short sighted."

She added, "My experience [with these types of panels] is that they present Aboriginal groups with the results and say take it or leave it. They create an us-versus-them situation. It shows a lax commitment and it sends a message that their rights are an afterthought."

Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come also takes issue with the exclusion of Aboriginal groups from a panel that would only benefit from their presence.

"The Crees already advise the government with the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee, but it would have been a step in the right direction to have the coordinating committee sit in on the panel," he said. "You would think by now that the Prime Minister would be well informed about the experience and expertise of the Cree people [in these areas]."

Craik also commented that this panel only further excludes other First Nations from the process of environmental conservation.

"The Cree at least have the coordinating committee that deals directly with the federal government and specifically the Ministry of the Environment," he said. "Most First Nations in Canada don't have that."

Coon Come went on to argue that this panel only enforces a practice that Aboriginal peoples have become all too accustomed to seeing.

"First Nations have always felt that there is a practice of exclusion," he said. "This was an opportunity to have inclusion."

Coon Come would not go as far as saying that this exclusion was done purposefully, but would also not clear the government of any intentional exclusionary practices.

"We're always suspicious," he said. "It's a shame that the Prime Minister would have excluded First Nations people and I would hope that he revisits the issue."

# New Cree nurses

## Nursing program in Chibougamau boasts 100% graduation rate

By Brandon Judd



The Nursing Exam

The inaugural class of Centre d'études collégiales à Chibougamau's Cree-centric nursing program leapt towards certification earlier this month, as they posted a 100% success rate on their technical exit exam.

The program is based on a mandate from the Cree Human Resources Department (CHRD), to meet the need for nurses in Northern communities, something that caused union demonstrations in Montreal in March. The CHRD launched the program with the help of the Cree School Board, the Cree Health Board, the Ministry of Education and Emploi-Québec.

"[Cree communities] need more and more nurses who can speak Cree to patients and families, and who understand the cultural approach, too," said Carole Tremblay, the program's coordinator. "This program is meant to address that."

The four-year program – extended from the common three-year nursing programs in Quebec – is designed to accommodate Cree students, many of whom have families to care for. It includes social workers who help coordinate lodging, daycare for children during

class and during work placements, and offer extra help to students who require it, either for difficulties with content or with language. All 14 of the students in the first graduating class, which began in 2008, passed their technical exam, though three still need to pass the English proficiency portion of finals.

"Relieved, I felt relieved to be finished with the four years," student Nancy Shecapio said when asked about the exam. "I'm very happy."

"This group is now well on their way to passing the OIIQ exams in September," said Tremblay.

"THEY ALL REALLY KNOW THEIR STUFF. I WOULD WANT MY GRANDMOTHER TO BE TAKEN CARE OF BY THEM."

The Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec (OIIQ) is the college that oversees the nursing profession in Quebec. They administer an exam each year, which prospective nurses must pass in order to be cleared to work in a hospital. The exit exams at CEC Chibougamau mimic the OIIQ format,

putting its students in an ideal position for accreditation.

Both exams' technical portions are set up as "bell-ringers": students progress through various stations, and in each they have just 10 minutes to not only sort out the answer but, in many cases, figure what the question is, too.

"They get a paper that says, 'You're a nurse on this unit, here's the patient and their charts: assess the situation and act on it,'" explained Sasha Dyck, a nurse and researcher at the Montreal General Hospital who was an exam proctor. "Answers to the original questions should lead you to some more questions, and we [the proctors] wait for them to ask the right questions and check them off."

One of the situations simulated a discharge: the student was informed that they were sending a long-term care patient home. They were required to procure the patient's basic information – their baseline, or ordinary, condition, what they were capable of then versus now, and what drugs they are taking, for example.

Dyck or one of his colleagues waited aside with a list of the questions that absolutely needed to be asked – many of which were borne from the answers to those initial, basic questions – so they could assess how well a student could think critically in a complex situation with real-life time constraints.

This rigorous testing process is advanced compared to other provinces, Dyck says, because it eschews the computer-based multiple-choice system with a fluid and changing simulation of a real hospital. Still, the graduates have more work to do before they can help alleviate the pressure on medical staff in northern communities.

Unlike nurses in much of Canada, graduates of this program must work for two years in a major hospital – in Chibougamau, where four of this year's graduates will work, or at the Montreal General – before returning to their communities. The Cree Health Board argues that since northern hospitals run on skeleton staffs, the nurses must be highly trained before arriving, because they



The graduating class



Two students with the medical dummy

will be working alone and must not need the help often required by new entrants.

Tremblay, while not necessarily disagreeing with this sentiment, was concerned that the demand for nurses would not be filled in good time.

"I wrote a letter to the Cree Health Board saying they need at least 100 new nurses in the next few years," she said.

With the program graduating about 15 students a year going forward, filling this quota will take longer with a two-year delay. But the program promises to

pick up steam in the coming years, as its partnership with nearby CEGEP de St-Félicien creates a near-seamless transition in the path from high school through to professional certification as a nurse.

Tremblay speaks highly of graduating students, who she describe as hard-working and resilient. Dyck, too, lavished high praise on them.

"They all really know their stuff," he said. "I would want my grandmother to be taken care of by them."

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# Standing up for nature

## Montreal concert draws attention to the Romaine River

Story and photos by Akiva Levitas

Rivers have always had a place in human society from providing a source of water to being a source of spiritual renewal as well as being the lifeblood of the surrounding ecosystem. Even though rivers are quite powerful forces, when no one around fights for their protection, their untamed beauty can be easily destroyed by creeping industrialization.

Fighting to protect the Romaine River in northern Quebec, Alliance Romaine organized a benefit concert in order to spread the word on the river's permanent destruction by the construction of a massive hydroelectric facility. This project will have negative effects on the locals and members of the Innu community of Ekuanitshit who live in close proximity to the river.

The project to dam up the river began in 2009 and includes four separate dams along the 500-km stretch of the Romaine River. As it currently stands, one of the dams has been completed with work just beginning on the next one.

The effects of this project on the ecosystem include mercury contamination, loss of biodiversity, and the creation of reservoirs, which will slow the process of dissolved oxygen in the water thereby making it less sustainable for aquatic life. Along with damage to the

environment, the local culture will take a hit because of the influence the river has had on it.

Alliance Romaine member and event organizer Isabelle Cadieux had plenty to say about the issues surrounding the dam project. The lack of transparency and the fast-tracking of the project by the Quebec government have caused many to be suspicious of the proposed benefits of the project.

"For one thing," Cadieux said, "it will be the taxpayers who will pay the most, both in a loss of money from Hydro-Québec exporting the electricity at a loss to the general public and for future generations who will not be able to enjoy the Romaine River."

The Montreal event featured local Quebec and First Nations artists who entertained the 150-strong crowd at Comité Social Centre-Sud on June 8. The show started with a bang with the performance of the Buffalo Hat Singers whose traditional sounds sent shockwaves throughout the venue.

Many of the concert-goers wore the red square in support of the social protest movement sweeping across Quebec. When asked why, Alliance Romaine member Charlotte Coutu said, "All of the problems are traced back to

the same source." That source being the Charest government.

"What the government is trying to do is to divide all of the movements and make it easier for them to fight opposing voices," Coutu explained. "But we are trying to do the opposite, by showing that all of the movements in Quebec are united."

In total, 12 artists performed at the event. The evening featured the rock stylings of Cannon Wagon and Tricot Machine, which caused an impromptu mosh pit to form mid-performance, while the poetry readings by Natasha Kanapé, Laure Morali and Mademoiselle Phébus gave the audience plenty to ponder about the plight of Aboriginals and nature in contemporary society. At the end of the event, artwork donated by local artists was raffled off to the attendees.

Most of the proceeds from this event will be going towards organizing a canoe trip on the Romaine River June 27-30. The purpose of the trip is to draw media attention to the plight of the river. The stretch of the river they will canoe down is already in an advanced stage of deforestation.

For more info on the Romaine River: [allianceromaine.wordpress.com](http://allianceromaine.wordpress.com)



### JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Goldcorp-Éléonore project is a mining site at the construction stage located in the Nord du Québec region. The company is working diligently to turn Éléonore into a world-class mine. This is why it is recruiting the most talented and experienced individuals. Indeed, the company is seeking energetic, proud and motivated people who want to take part in this large-scale project.

Goldcorp is committed to the principles of sustainable development, which guarantee the prosperity of the company's partners and employees, as well as the communities with which it interacts.

**Take part in this forward-looking project!**

#### CONCRETE PLANT OPERATOR - ref. : 80-007

Reporting to the Foreman of the surface services, the concrete plant operator plans and realizes concrete production of the mine site, manages the plant using a computerized production system.

Acts as team leader by distributing work to loader operators and truckers. Candidate must manage inventory and order needed material for concrete production. Performs plant maintenance and cleaning. Writes a daily production report in the computer system.

The candidate has a minimum of 5 years experience as an operator of a computerized concrete plant. Knows the Marcotte production system. Has excellent computer skills. Has a sense of organization and leadership. The position is based at the location of the mine.

#### CIVIL ENGINEER OR CIVIL ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN ref. : 80-008

Reporting to the Director, Engineering / Construction during the construction period and then reporting to the Director, Surface Processes and Services from the start of operations, planned for 2014, the civil engineer or technician participates in monitoring the implementation of civil works (roads, infrastructure, bridges, tailings, etc.).

In situations of exploitation, he oversees the operation of the tailings and civil works on the surface infrastructure. He works closely with the following departments : processes and surface service area and Environment dept.

Candidate must have a university or college training in civil engineering and possess 5 to 10 years of relevant experience in a construction and / or operating in the mining sector. Candidate must be familiar with safety standards, enjoy working in teams, act independently, be flexible and available to work in a remote location. Bilingualism is an asset.

The schedule is 4 days of work followed by 3 days off during operation and may vary during construction. The position is located on the mine site.

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Interest candidates are invited to submit their résumé by e-mail before, July 9, 2012. Candidates must mention the posting reference number.

Human Ressources department:

[opinacajobs@goldcorp.com](mailto:opinacajobs@goldcorp.com)



# The Cree role in the coming election

Quebec will soon be facing a crucial provincial election, likely sooner than later, and probably early this autumn. As in any election campaign, a well-organized party will deploy a two-fold strategy of negative attacks against its opponents combined with a positive message of optimism that it hopes to sell on voters.

For Premier Jean Charest and the governing Liberals, the strategy was plain enough even before a big part of their campaign strategy was recently leaked to the media. According to the document, Charest will run against “*la rue et le referendum*” – against the student street protests and the separatism of the Parti québécois.

That’s not a big surprise for almost anyone in Quebec who isn’t in a coma. Charest has done everything possible to draw out this spring’s epic student strike and to goad protesters into actions that prove the need for a strong government – his, of course – to enforce social order. He hopes to draw a vivid contrast between his Liberals and the PQ’s support for those “violent and intimidating” protesters. And the Liberals, of course, have campaigned against separatism in every single election since the 1960s. Nothing new there.

What will be new, or newer, at least, is the positive message: the glowing economic promise of the Charest government’s Plan Nord. That’s the pitch the government is hoping will help the electorate forget the Liberal economic record of waste, scandal and corruption over the past nine years.

This is where the Cree can expect to play a supporting role in the political suspense drama now being written and rehearsed. The Liberals will expect a backdrop of smiling, cooperative extras for the tale they hope to spin this fall. We all know the Cree have been promised the moon, or at least some sizeable crumbs, from the mining frenzy that has a starring role in the Plan Nord. What worries them is that some folks might not play their parts as scripted in this modern-day Klondike.

We had a glimpse of that a couple weeks ago, when the community of Mistissini staged a remarkable display of solidarity against Strateco’s Matoush uranium mine project. The community spoke with a single voice in rejecting the project. This will become the major test of Quebec’s good faith toward the Cree and its willingness to accept Cree influence over development projects.

As the Canadian Boreal Initiative noted, the issue is whether this northern Quebec development plan will respect the principle of free, prior and informed consent, nation to nation, between Quebec and Aboriginal nations, as stated in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Under Matthew Coon Come and previous Grand Chiefs going back to, well, the first incarnation of Grand Chief Coon

Come, the Cree have agreed to cooperate in opening the territory to natural resource extraction projects. But, we are told, not at any price. What is clear is that uranium is off the table.

So Charest is in a bit of a bind. The federal government of Stephen Harper, of course, has adopted a bulldozer approach to environmental policy. Expect the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission to give a green light to Matoush. The only thing standing in the way of Strateco’s shovels will be a person named Jean Charest.

In the current context, Charest is playing high-stakes poker with the future of many nations in a desperate attempt to maintain power. After three election victories and almost a decade in government, however, Charest’s Liberals are tired and used up, willing to employ any tactic or dirty trick to distract people from its sorry record.

“SO DON’T EXPECT A DECISION ON THE MATOUSH MINE BEFORE THE ELECTION. SHOULD THE LIBERALS BE RETURNED WITH A MAJORITY GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER, MY FEELING IS THAT THE CREE SHOULD START INVESTING IN HOUSEHOLD GEIGER COUNTERS.”

So don’t expect a decision on the Matoush mine before the election. Should the Liberals be returned with a majority government, however, my feeling is that the Cree should start investing in household Geiger counters.

This is all a chapter in the epic saga of Quebec’s romantic vision of the North. As prominent Quebec thinker Louis-Edmond Hamelin said during a conference on sustainable northern development last week, the key to realizing the Plan Nord will be Quebec’s relationship with the First Nations who live there.

Hamelin called his concept the “total Quebec”, meaning that Quebec must develop the North before it can realize its potential and fully consolidate its sovereignty over the vast territory. But, because of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement and other such treaties, Quebec will have to learn listen to and even to “love” Aboriginals if it expects to fully exploit the natural riches of the North.

It’s a bit of a contradiction. But we will find out how much love there is when a final decision comes down on the Matoush project. For the Cree, it could eventually mean that there will be a lot more than the economy that is glowing.

## JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Goldcorp-Éléonore project is a mining site at the construction stage located in the Nord du Québec region. The company is working diligently to turn Éléonore into a world-class mine. This is why it is recruiting the most talented and experienced individuals. Indeed, the company is seeking energetic, proud and motivated people who want to take part in this large-scale project.

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### METALLURGICAL TECHNICIAN - ref. : 80-005

Reporting to the Chief Metallurgist, the metallurgy technician is responsible for managing the metallurgy laboratory and metallurgical testing aimed at optimization and process development of the concentrator. Manages sampling and the preparation of monthly inventories. Participates in the development of operating procedures, laboratory tests, etc. Is responsible for monitoring the consumption of reagents from the mill.

Candidate must have a college degree in metallurgy and 3 to 5 years of experience in dealing with a gold ore concentrator. Bilingualism (English and French) is an asset.

The position is based at the location of the mine.

### CARPENTER - ref. : 80-006

Reporting to the Foreman of the surface services, the carpenter must perform maintenance carpentry and maintenance involving the construction, alteration and repair of buildings and their components. Performs a variety of maintenance and minor repairs in the various aspects of building. Reads and interprets plans and specifications. Enters orders and other information into the company's management computer system.

Candidate holds a diploma in carpentry and / or a minimum of 5 years experience in carpentry. Candidate must have good computer skills. A Class 5 driver's license is mandatory.

The position is located on the mine site.

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## UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

### We need to stand together

by Xavier Kataquapit

Recently I have been noticing so much news regarding First Nations and interaction with resource developers. This kind of thing has been going on for more than 100 years but things have changed in the past few decades. As Native people we never had much to do with all the development that has taken place on our traditional lands. Then, due to court decisions and the lobbying of Native political bodies and organizations across Canada, the playing field got a whole lot more level.

The result of this new way of thinking and a policy of inclusion for Native people when it comes to development on First Nation territories means that a lot of formerly disenfranchised original people of this land are now coming into their own. We are reaping the rewards of many mining, hydro, forestry and other projects that have provided for employment, training and financial opportunities that we never had before.

For the most part things seem to be going very good with negotiations between First Nations, resource developers and governments leading to positive ventures while environmental and conservation concerns are also being addressed. However, there are some problems with developers and governments that want to rush the move into pristine Native traditional lands without the proper consultation or respect.

When it comes to the development of some of the very last pristine wilderness areas in Canada we Native people are all that stand in the way of business as usual and the movement of industry into huge tracts of land where few men have walked. These are places of great beauty, clean water, fresh air and multitudes of wildlife. I know firsthand what these traditional lands mean to my people. I have walked in the footsteps of my ancestors on the ancient shores of the great James Bay and its islands.

One way or the other, all of this land will end up being developed and we all know that. The thing is that we need better plans and a lot more thinking about how we are going to proceed with all the projects happening. A good place to start is for everyone to show respect for each other and above all ... for the land.

Development does not have to mean conflict. I can point to the De Beers Victor mine near my home community of Attawapiskat as an example of a mining project that has moved ahead without dire consequences. Yes, things could always be

better with such huge projects on traditional wilderness lands and yes there have been problems here and there. But many of my people have found jobs, been trained and the community has benefited to some degree from this initiative. In many ways, we were never really ready for such a huge project in our backyard but somehow we have managed to move ahead.

I look at many of the resource development projects happening around the Timmins and Kirkland Lake areas and I see mining, forestry and hydro projects moving ahead with the involvement of First Nations. That is in large part due to the work of Wabun Tribal Council and their First Nations Chiefs and staff. In just over a decade I have seen Wabun First Nations go from "have not" communities to positive environments where there is a new hope, people are being employed, starting businesses, being trained, the quality of life is improving and there is hope for the future. Wabun has ended up being one of the go-to organizations in Canada when First Nation tribal councils, First Nations organizations, government and resource developers need to find a way to make a project happen. I know you can't change every situation in every First Nation in a decade or two but there is some good work going on and for the first time in history Native people are looking to a better future.

One of the things we are going to need as First Nation people right across this land when it comes to dealing with resource developers and government is strong solidarity. We need to stand behind our national and provincial political organizations like the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), Chiefs of Ontario (COO) and Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN), as well as our regional representatives at Mushkegowuk Council, Wabun Tribal Council and Matawa Tribal Council just to name a few. Our power to negotiate good deals for our people and future generations will have a lot to do with strength in numbers and we will need to count on the expertise and leadership of our First Nation political bodies and organizations to make sure we are not intimidated or short changed in development on our ancient lands. History shows us that governments and industry have always used the trick of divide-and-conquer to manage us in the past so let's make sure to get behind our Native political and related First Nation organizations to make sure we are a strong, informed, aware and spiritual force to be reckoned with.

# CLASSIFIEDS

## BIRTHDAYS

I'd like to wish a happy birthday to my little sister Leona Mary-Jane Baribeau. She will be 16 years old on July 31st. I love you so much incheem, you are my best friend! I hope you have a great day. I also want to say happy belated birthday to my favorite uncle Andy, from the awesome Jolene Baribeau :)

## HOLIDAY GREETINGS

Happy Father's Day to the father of my many children :) Charlie Matoush! From all your children and your wife Deborah! Also, happy 1st Father's Day to our grandson Hayden's father, Paul Coon, from the gang at 18 Bedabin Street, Mississini. We love you both so much!

## EVENTS / RESOURCES

Art Workshops for Youth: If you are between the ages of 15 and 29 you are invited to develop your creativity in weekly stone carving workshops being conducted at the Inter-Tribal Youth Centre located at 2001 boul. St. Laurent corner Ontario street (downstairs in the building of the Native Friendship Centre of Montreal). Workshops are every Thursday from 3pm to 6pm. For further information call 514-499-1854.

## PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Where to get help: bilingual, anonymous, confidential and free phone services, 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

Kid's Help Phone Line: 1-800-668-6868  
([www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca))

Youth Helpline: 1-800-263-2266 ([www.teljeunes.com](http://www.teljeunes.com))

Parents' Helpline: 1-800-361-5085  
([www.parenthelpline.ca](http://www.parenthelpline.ca))

Missing Children's Network: They'll help you find kids who have run away or disappeared. 514-843-4333  
([www.enfant-retourquebec.ca](http://www.enfant-retourquebec.ca))

Drug Addiction help and reference: 1-800-265-2626  
([www.drogue-aidereference.qc.ca](http://www.drogue-aidereference.qc.ca))

Gambling Addiction help and reference: 1-800-265-2626  
([www.info-reference.qc.ca](http://www.info-reference.qc.ca))

S.O.S. Conjugal Violence:  
1-800-363-9010  
([www.sosviolenceconjugale.com](http://www.sosviolenceconjugale.com))

Health and Sexuality Resources Center: 1-888-855-7432  
(Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) ([www.criss.org](http://www.criss.org))

Gay Helpline: 1-888-505-1010 (Monday to Friday, 8 am to 3 am and Saturday-Sunday, 11 am to 3 am)

The Native Women's Shelter of Montreal: 1-866-403-4688  
([www.nwsm.info](http://www.nwsm.info))

Suicide Action Québec:  
1-866-277-3553  
([www.suicide-quebec.net/](http://www.suicide-quebec.net/))

Residential School Survivors: A 24 hour toll-free crisis line is available to provide immediate emotional assistance and can be reached 24-hours a day, seven days a week: 1-866-925-4419. Other support services and information for survivors is available on the AFN website at: [www.afn.ca/residentialschools/resources](http://www.afn.ca/residentialschools/resources)



Canadian Environmental  
Assessment Agency

Agence canadienne  
d'évaluation environnementale

## Public Notice

### Quebec Lithium Spodumene Mine Project Public Comments Invited and Federal Funding Available

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (the Agency) is conducting a comprehensive study type of environmental assessment of the proposed Quebec Lithium Spodumene Mine Project located in Quebec. The public is invited to comment on the project and the conduct of the comprehensive study.

The public is also invited to comment on the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Guidelines that identify potential environmental effects to be addressed and information that needs to be included in the proponent's EIS. Public comments received will be reviewed and considered before the guidelines are finalized and issued to the proponent.

The draft EIS Guidelines and more information on this project are available on the Agency's website at [www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca](http://www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca) (registry reference number 12-03-59158). To obtain a paper copy of the document, contact the project manager listed in this notice.

Written comments in either official language must be sent by July 23, 2012 to:

Quebec Lithium Spodumene Mine Project  
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency  
Kambale Katahwa, Project Manager  
901-1550, d'Estimauville avenue  
Quebec QC G1J 0C1  
Telephone: 418-649-6444  
Fax: 418-649-6443  
[QuebecLithium@ceaa-acee.gc.ca](mailto:QuebecLithium@ceaa-acee.gc.ca)

All comments received will be considered public and will become part of the project file. This is the first of several public comment periods that will occur during the environmental assessment of the project.

\$29,000 available for public participation

The Agency is making available \$29,000 under its participant funding program to assist groups and individuals to participate in activities related to subsequent public consultations during this environmental assessment.

Applications received by July 23, 2012 will be considered. To submit an application or to obtain additional information on the program, contact:

Participant Funding Program  
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency  
Ina Zanovello, Participant Funding Program Officer  
160 Elgin Street, 22nd Floor  
Ottawa ON K1A 0H3  
Telephone: 1-866-582-1884 or 613-960-0282  
Fax: 613-948-9172  
[PFP.PAFP@ceaa-acee.gc.ca](mailto:PFP.PAFP@ceaa-acee.gc.ca)

Information on the Participant Funding Program, including a guide and the application form, is available on the Agency's website.

### The Proposed Project

The Quebec Lithium Inc. mining company is proposing to establish an open-pit spodumene mine with a daily extraction rate of 3800 tonnes. The Quebec Lithium mine property is located approximately 60 kilometres north of Val-d'Or and 38 kilometres southeast of Amos.

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency administers the federal environmental assessment process, which identifies the environmental effects of proposed projects and measures to address those effects, in support of sustainable development.

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